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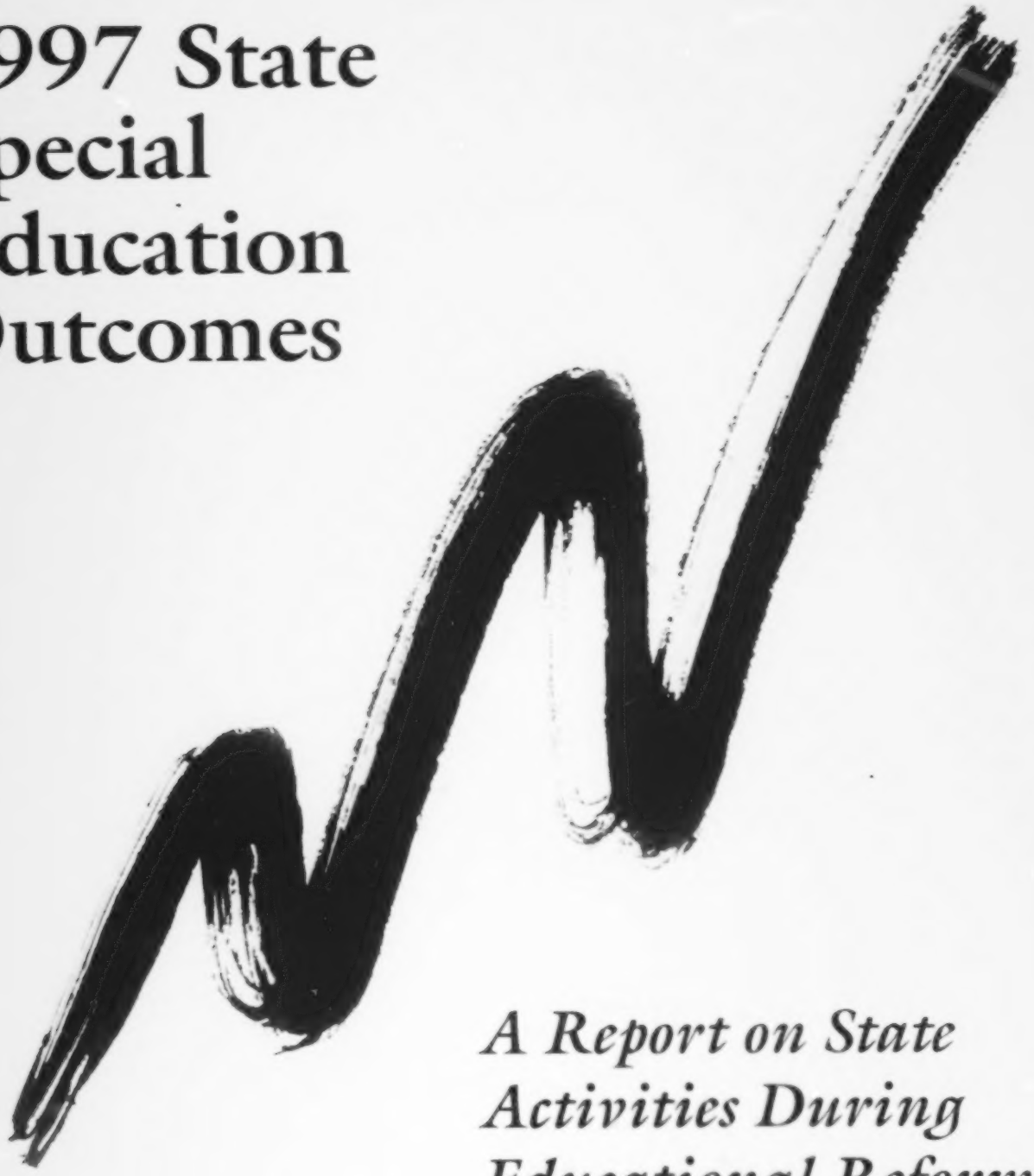
ABSTRACT

This report presents the results of a survey of state directors of special education from the 50 regular states and 6 unique states, which examined several aspects of state-level educational accountability systems and their inclusion of students with disabilities. Specific sections address: students with disabilities and standards-based reform; measuring participation in statewide testing; state activities in developing alternate assessments; using assessment results for students with disabilities; Individualized Educational Programs (IEP) and assessment; measuring non-academic outcomes for students with disabilities; and current issues and technical assistance needs. Findings of the survey indicate: (1) most state special education divisions or units report being very involved with statewide educational reform efforts; (2) only 32 states report having readily available information on the numbers of students with disabilities who participate in any of their statewide assessments; (3) state directors point to the altruistic motivations of parents and teachers and high stakes for schools as the leading factors that inhibit greater participation of students with disabilities in assessment programs; and (4) only six states require IEPs to document the linkage between a student's individual goals and objectives and the state's content or curriculum standards. An appendix includes data on state directors' level of involvement in reform activities. (CR)

1997 State Special Education Outcomes



A Report on State Activities During Educational Reform

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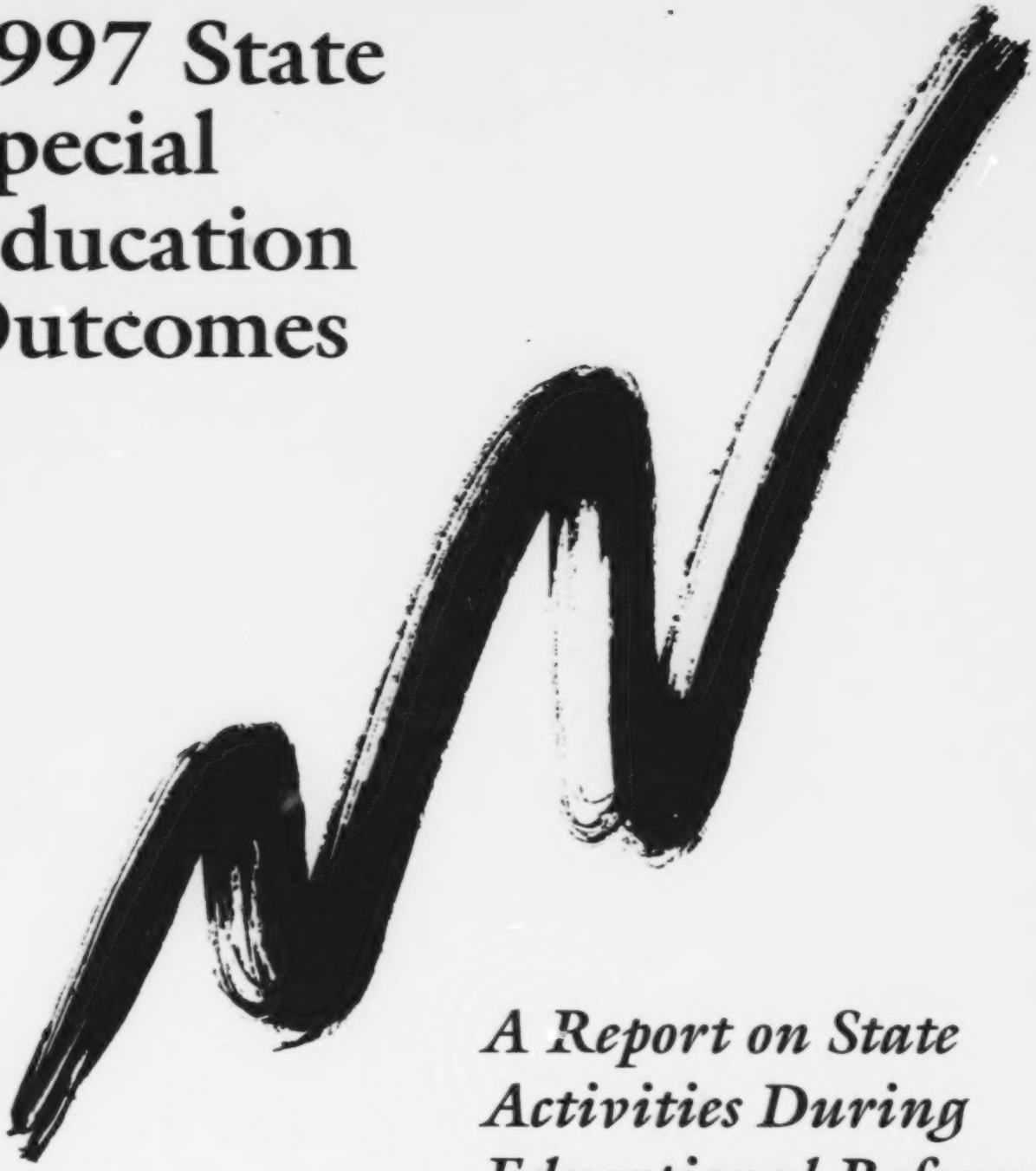

A Report on State Activities During Educational Reform

NATIONAL CENTER ON EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

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The Mission of the National Center on Educational Outcomes

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NCEO IS A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, THE National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE), and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). Part of NCEO's mission is to provide national leadership in assisting state and local education agencies in their development of policies and practices that encourage and support the participation of students with disabilities in accountability systems and data collection efforts. NCEO's goals for students with disabilities are as follows:

Goal 1: Students with disabilities will be a part of nationally-initiated educational reforms.

Goal 2: Students with disabilities will be a part of each state's standards-based educational reform efforts.

Goal 3: Students with disabilities will be included in national educational data collection efforts.

Goal 4: Students with disabilities will be included in national and state level reporting of educational outcomes, with results that can be disaggregated.

Many NCEO activities promote these goals. In addition to its national survey, NCEO is working with its organizational partners to provide needed information and support to state education agencies seeking to include students with disabilities in their efforts to provide better educational outcomes to ***all*** students.

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- Michael Moore, publications director for the National Center on Educational Outcomes.

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These were the state directors of special education in March 1997 when the survey was conducted.

Executive Summary

THE 1997 NATIONAL SURVEY OF STATE SPECIAL EDUCATION DIRECTORS IS THE SIXTH IN A series of surveys that have been conducted by NCEO since 1991. Among its findings are the following:

- In general, states are placing high levels of emphasis on the foundational stages of statewide educational reform, and most state special education divisions or units report being very involved with these efforts.
- Only 32 regular and unique states report having readily available information on the numbers of students with disabilities who participate in any of their statewide assessments. Even among those that report having such data, some states were unable to provide them.
- State directors point to the altruistic motivations of parents and teachers and high stakes for schools as the leading factors that inhibit greater participation of students with disabilities in assessment programs.
- Out of the 20 states that indicate some type of activity underway for alternate assessments, only two states are implementing such assessments at the present time. All others are at various stages of development, from initial discussions to more formal planning efforts.
- Data gathered on students with disabilities are not publicly reported in most states, but are used for internal review.
- Very few states have any formal process by which assessment results for students with disabilities are used for curricular or instructional decision-making at the state or local level.
- Only *six* states currently require Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs) to document the linkage between a student's individual goals and objectives, and the state's content or curriculum standards.
- Most states do *not* measure non-academic outcomes for students with disabilities.

These findings highlight the current status of students with disabilities within the context of educational reform. They also reinforce the need to continue to survey state directors of special education about the status of state special education outcomes.

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Overview of 1997 Survey

SINCE 1991, WHEN NCEO CONDUCTED ITS FIRST NATIONAL SURVEY OF STATE SPECIAL education directors, efforts to reform our nation's schools have proliferated at both the state and national levels. Almost every state has been engaged in some type of reform since that time, with efforts often focused on the establishment of high standards and assessment systems aligned with those standards. Federal efforts have included the establishment of national education goals, the work of various standard-setting groups in producing world-class standards in numerous content areas, and passage of several pieces of education legislation, including *Goals 2000: Educate America Act*, the *Improving America's Schools Act*, the *School-to-Work Opportunities Act* and the reauthorization of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*. Provisions within each of these laws stimulate and support a variety of state-level activities that promote educational opportunities for all students.

Central to many of these state and national efforts is the concept of *educational accountability*, a premise that our nation's schools must take more responsibility for the outcomes realized by our students. NCEO has joined many other state and federal organizations in arguing that such accountability is realized only when *all* children, including students with disabilities, are considered in the planning, development, and implementation of such systems.

The 1997 Special Education Outcomes survey examined several aspects of state-level educational accountability systems, and their inclusion of students with disabilities. Results are presented in seven sections:

- Students with Disabilities and Standards-Based Reform
- Measuring the Participation of Students with Disabilities in Statewide Testing
- State Activities in Developing Alternate Assessments
- Using Assessment Results for Students with Disabilities
- Individualized Educational Programs and Assessments
- Measuring Non-Academic Outcomes for Students with Disabilities
- Current Issues and Technical Assistance Needs

Those surveyed for the 1997 report were the state special education directors in all 50 regular states and the 10 unique states that abide by the provisions of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA). Responses were gathered through mailed or faxed surveys, and in some cases, from telephone interviews. In some instances, state special education directors asked other state officials to assist in answering the survey questions. Responses were obtained from the state special education offices of all 50 regular states and from six unique states, representing an overall response rate of 93 percent.

Ten Unique States

- American Samoa
- Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)
- District of Columbia
- Guam
- Mariana Islands
- Marshall Islands
- Micronesia
- Palau
- Puerto Rico
- U.S. Virgin Islands

The Context of Reform

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage of State Student Populations Receiving Special Education Services for the 1995-96 School Year

Table 1 displays the number of students with disabilities, ages 6 to 17 years, being served under the provisions of IDEA during the 1995-96 school year (see third column). It also shows in the last column what proportions these totals represent when compared to the total estimated resident population of students 6–17 years (see second column).

Regular States	Estimated Resident Population for Children (Ages 6-17)[1]	Number of Children Served Under IDEA (Ages 6-17)[2]	Percentage of All Children Served Under IDEA (Ages 6-17)[3]
Alabama	718,777	84,440	11.75%
Alaska	124,659	14,958	12.00%
Arizona	766,094	65,263	8.52%
Arkansas	440,607	44,024	9.99%
California	5,431,442	489,168	9.01%
Colorado	656,154	59,786	9.11%
Connecticut	520,936	65,412	12.56%
Delaware	116,489	13,025	11.18%
Florida	2,199,439	271,078	12.32%
Georgia	1,259,349	117,164	9.30%
Hawaii	194,692	14,177	7.28%
Idaho	239,878	19,989	8.33%
Illinois	2,022,193	220,648	10.91%
Indiana	996,104	115,629	11.61%
Iowa	501,367	57,148	11.40%
Kansas	471,483	45,404	9.63%
Kentucky	658,209	64,997	9.87%
Louisiana	835,121	76,743	9.19%
Maine	213,116	26,956	12.65%
Maryland	825,680	87,489	10.60%
Massachusetts	930,111	135,126	14.53%
Michigan	1,687,257	161,511	9.57%
Minnesota	854,452	83,697	9.80%
Mississippi	511,505	57,399	11.22%
Missouri	934,056	107,763	11.54%
Montana	166,468	15,834	9.51%
Nebraska	304,423	34,460	11.32%
Nevada	254,991	24,146	9.47%
New Hampshire	200,877	21,827	10.87%
New Jersey	1,266,428	171,551	13.55%
New Mexico	333,381	41,256	12.38%
New York	2,900,534	323,144	11.14%

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage of State Student Populations Receiving Special Education Services for the 1995-96 School Year (continued)

Regular States	Estimated Resident Population for Children (Ages 6-17)[1]	Number of Children Served Under IDEA (Ages 6-17)[2]	Percentage of All Children Served Under IDEA (Ages 6-17)[3]
North Carolina	1,178,138	125,794	10.68%
North Dakota	119,402	10,567	8.85%
Ohio	1,924,275	197,241	10.25%
Oklahoma	599,012	63,161	10.54%
Oregon	542,381	56,338	10.39%
Pennsylvania	1,955,934	179,234	9.16%
Rhode Island	155,491	21,461	13.80%
South Carolina	625,977	73,090	11.68%
South Dakota	142,818	12,703	8.89%
Tennessee	869,728	109,981	12.65%
Texas	3,510,297	386,842	11.02%
Utah	454,117	45,686	10.06%
Vermont	101,168	9,518	9.41%
Virginia	1,053,073	122,388	11.62%
Washington	950,332	89,825	9.45%
West Virginia	293,458	39,277	13.38%
Wisconsin	933,832	87,990	9.42%
Wyoming	96,895	10,490	10.83%
Totals	**15,506,328**	**1,641,586**	**10.59%**

[1] Data taken from Table AF4 published in *Nineteenth Annual Report to Congress* (U.S. Department of Education, 1997).

[2] Data taken from Table AA1 published in *Nineteenth Annual Report to Congress* (U.S. Department of Education, 1997).

[3] Data taken from Table AA10 published in *Nineteenth Annual Report to Congress* (U.S. Department of Education, 1997).

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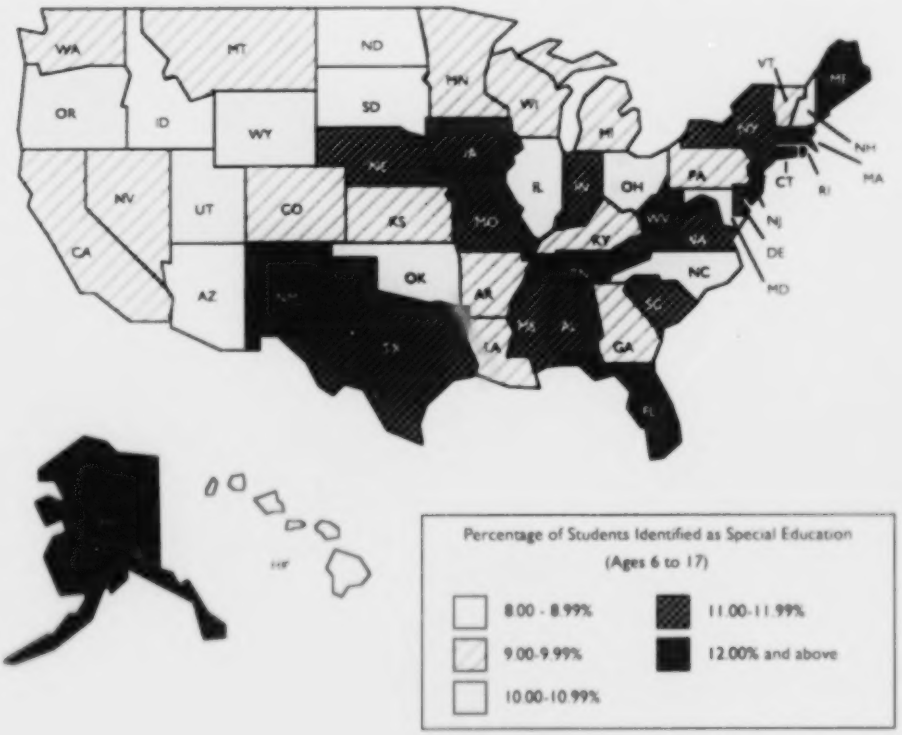
Figure 1. Proportion of State Special Education Populations to Overall Student Populations (Ages 6 to 17) Who Received Special Education Services in 1995–96 School Year

State special education populations differ in their proportion to the overall student populations because of a variety of factors, including differences among states in their eligibility requirements for receiving special education services. Figure 1 illustrates the variance found among the 50 regular states in terms of five percentage ranges.



*Hawaii's percentage is under 8 percent.

Estimates are based on the 1995-96 school year and are taken from Table AA10 from the *Nineteenth Annual Report to Congress* (U.S. Department of Education, 1997).

Students with Disabilities and Standards-Based Reform

CURRENT REFORM EFFORTS EMPHASIZE ACCOUNTABILITY. BUT "ACCOUNTABILITY" IS AN ambiguous term that is used in many ways; it limits our ability to describe the unique systems that states have employed to ensure educational accountability for their students, schools, and school systems. To better examine current reform efforts, the 1997 survey looked at nine discrete activities, recognizing that the activities rarely occur in linear fashion, but more often occur simultaneously, driven by a variety of policy directives and political forces. These forces result in different levels of emphasis being placed on different types of activities.

State special education directors rated the emphasis being placed on each of nine identified areas of effort by their state agency (see below), using a five-point scale from "no emphasis" to "high emphasis." These ratings indicate that states are very focused on some of the foundational activities for building educational accountability systems. Over two-thirds of the state directors indicated that high emphasis is placed on the establishment or revision of content standards or curricular frameworks, with similar numbers of states placing high emphasis on aligning these standards and frameworks with statewide assessments. On the other hand, establishing rewards or sanctions for schools and districts is receiving less overall attention as these accountability systems continue in their development. Only 13 state directors indicated that high emphasis is placed on this aspect of accountability. Figures 2 through 10 illustrate the emphasis states are placing on the nine areas of reform activities.

Areas of Reform Activities

- Establishing or revising educational outcomes, standards, or curricular frameworks
- Aligning assessments to content or curricular standards
- Developing or revising participation and exemption policies for statewide assessments
- Developing or revising testing accommodation policies
- Determining statewide reporting procedures
- Establishing rewards or sanctions for schools and districts
- Providing staff development training to promote implementation of new standards and assessments
- Reforming preservice educational programs in teacher preparation institutions
- Engaging parents and communities in reform efforts through public outreach activities

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Figure 2. Establishing or Revising Educational Outcomes, Standards, or Curricular Frameworks

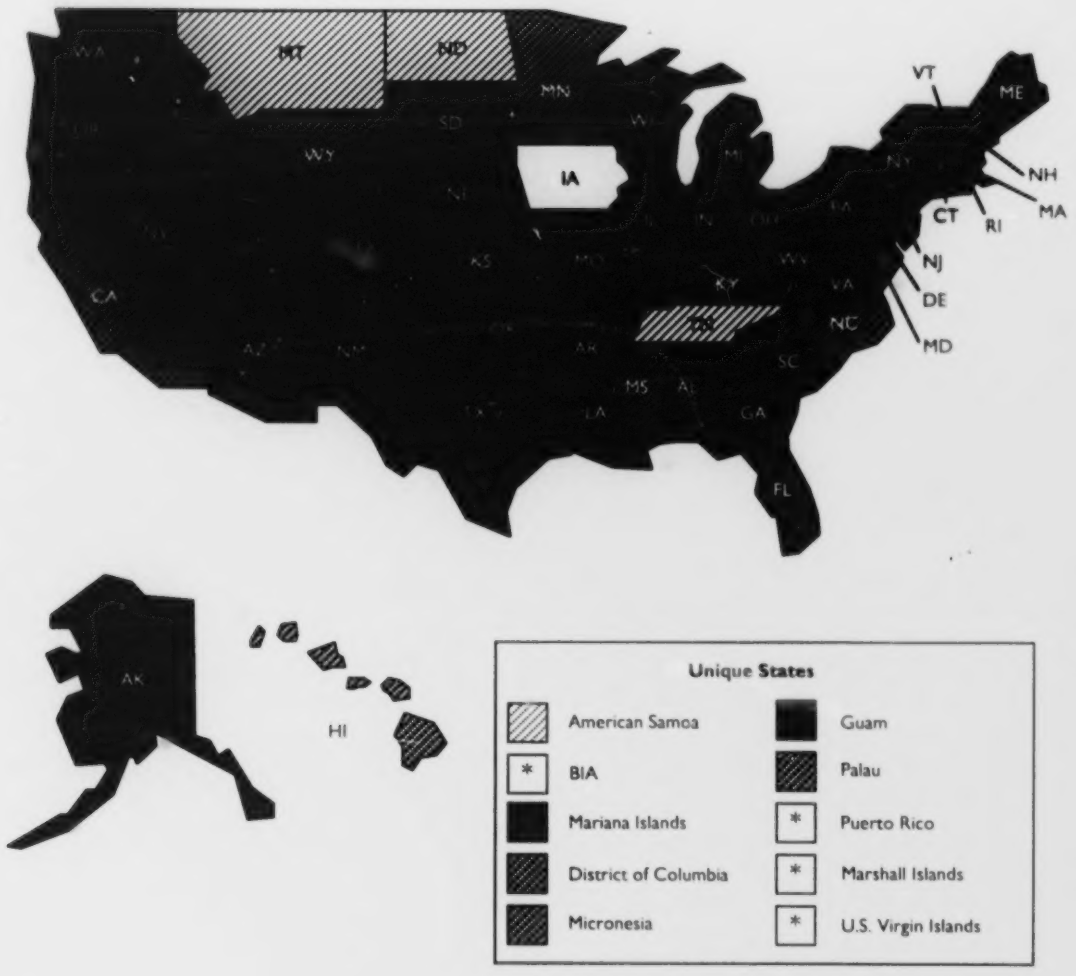

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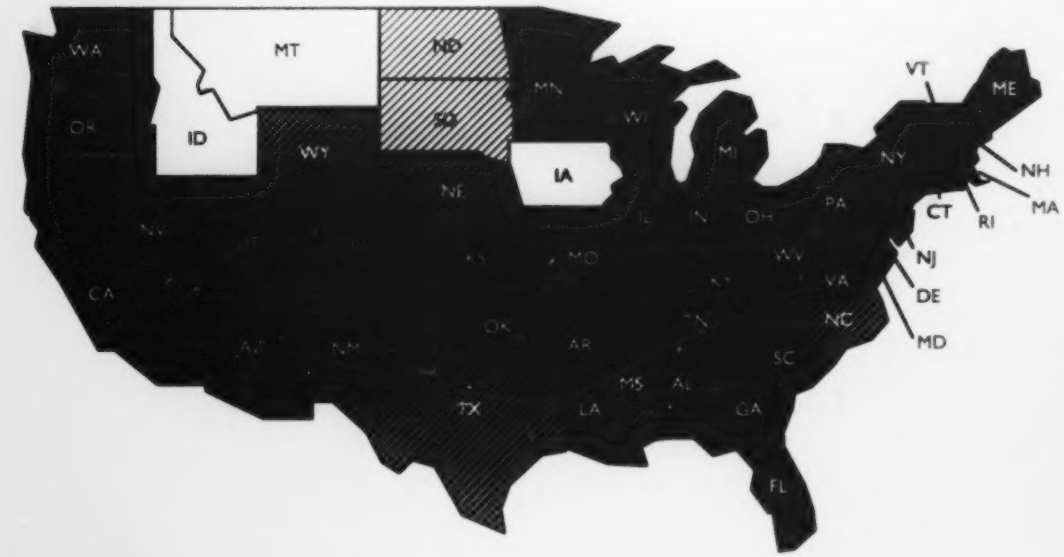
Figure 3. Aligning Assessments to Content or Curricular Standards



Unique States

American Samoa	Guam
BIA	Palau
Mariana Islands	Puerto Rico
District of Columbia	Marshall Islands
Micronesia	U.S. Virgin Islands

Degree of Emphasis Being Placed on Reform Activity

1) No Emphasis (Activity either concluded or not initiated)
2) Little Emphasis
3) Some Emphasis
4) Moderately High Emphasis
5) High Emphasis

* No Response

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Figure 4. Developing or Revising Participation and Exemption Policies for Statewide Assessments

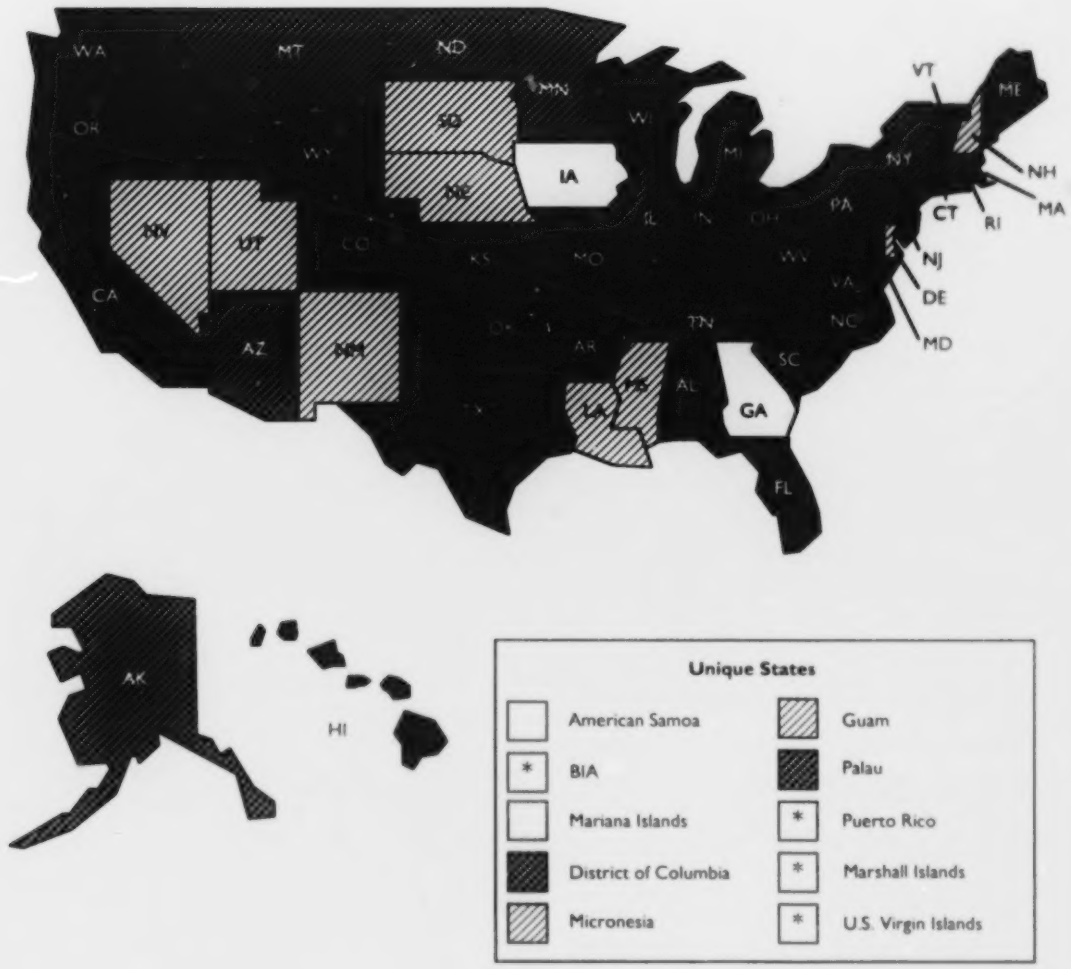

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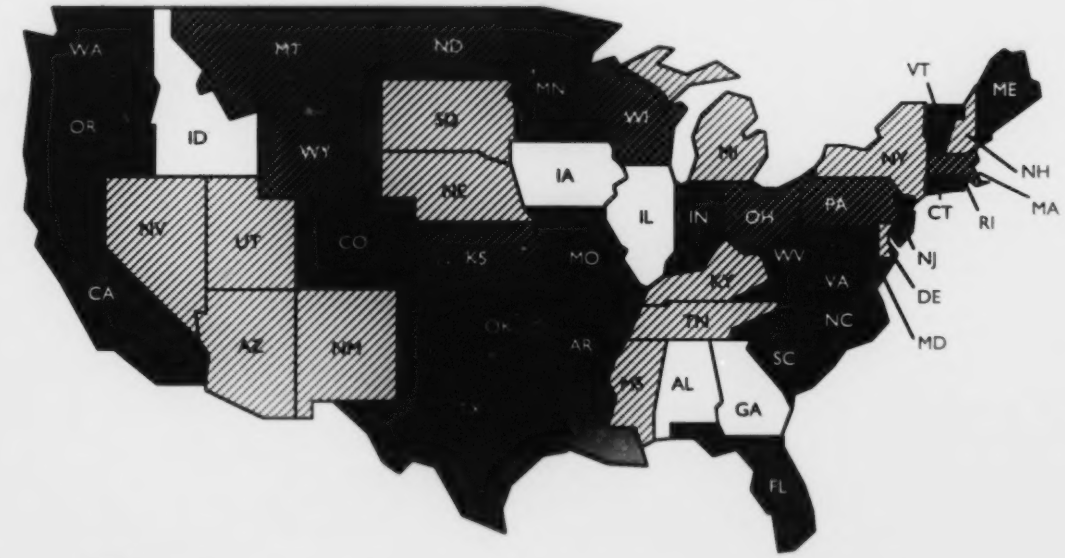
Figure 5. Developing or Revising Testing Accommodation Policies



Unique States

American Samoa	Guam
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Mariana Islands	* Puerto Rico
District of Columbia	* Marshall Islands
Micronesia	* U.S. Virgin Islands

Degree of Emphasis Being Placed on Reform Activity

1) No Emphasis (Activity either concluded or not initiated)

2) Little Emphasis

3) Some Emphasis

4) Moderately High Emphasis

5) High Emphasis

* No Response

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Figure 6. Determining Statewide Reporting Procedures

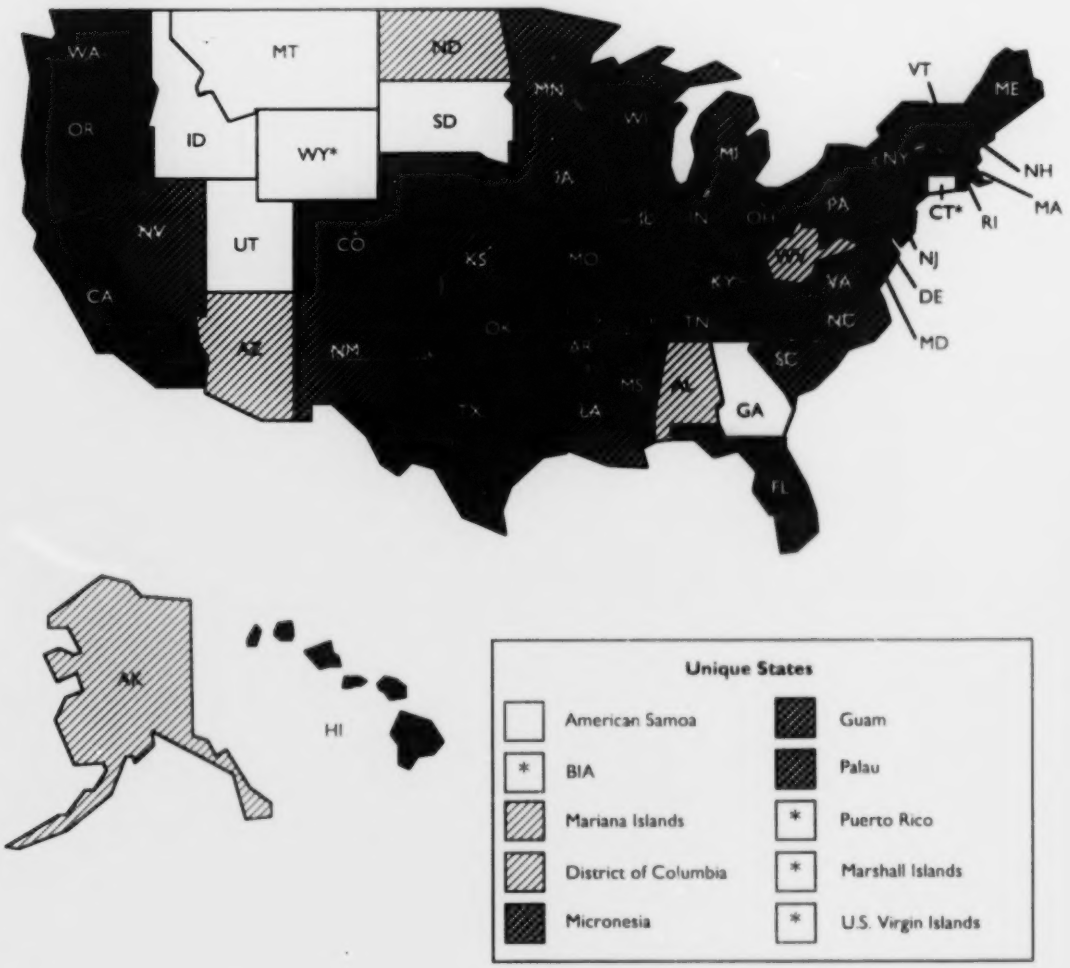

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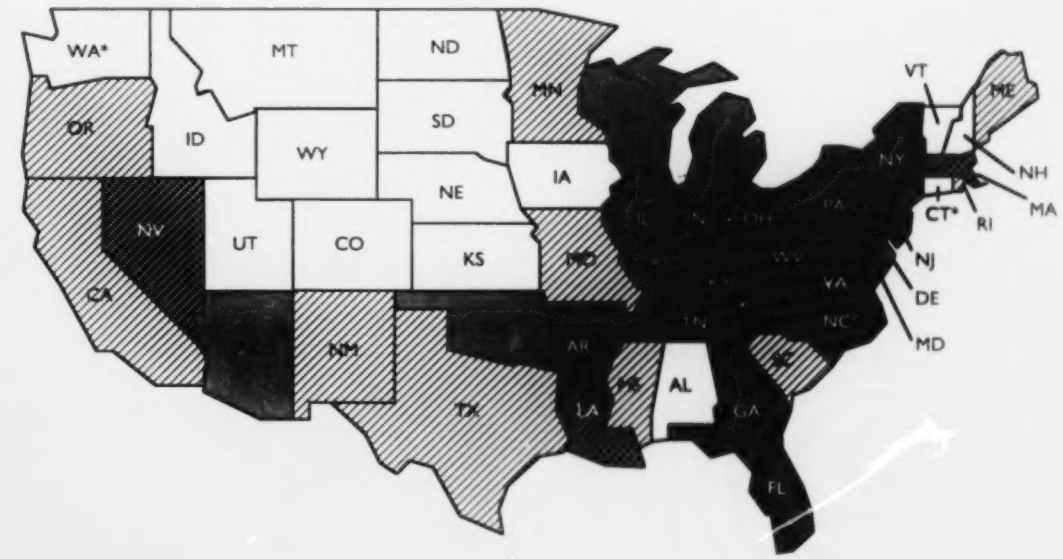
Figure 7. Establishing Rewards or Sanctions for Schools and Districts



Unique States

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Micronesia	* U.S. Virgin Islands

Degree of Emphasis Being Placed on Reform Activity

1) No Emphasis (Activity either concluded or not initiated)
2) Little Emphasis
3) Some Emphasis
4) Moderately High Emphasis
5) High Emphasis

* No Response

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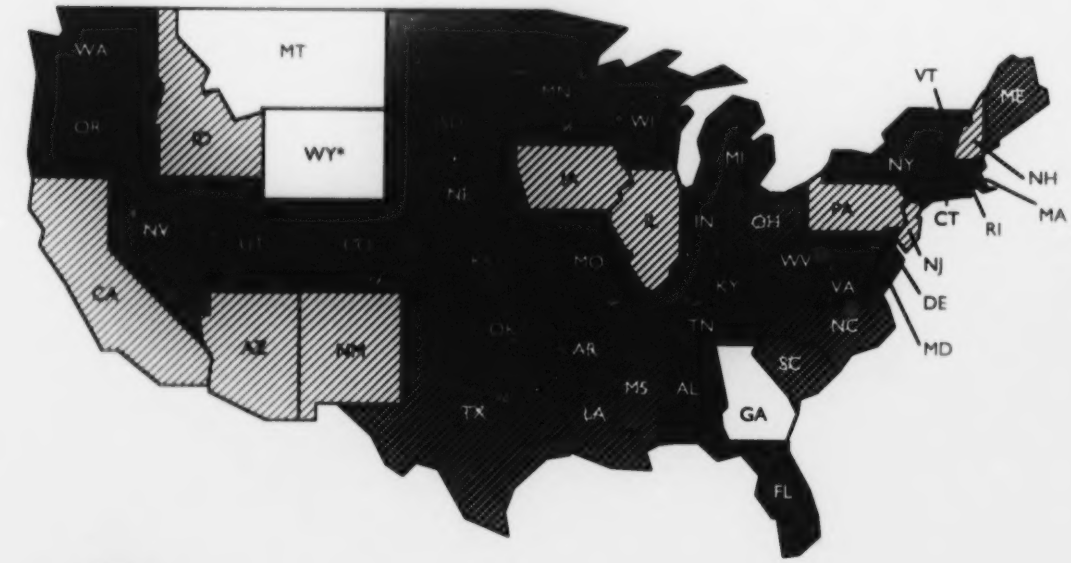
Figure 8. Providing Staff Development Training to Promote Implementation of New Standards and Assessments



Unique States

American Samoa	Guam
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Mariana Islands	* Puerto Rico
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Micronesia	* U.S. Virgin Islands

Degree of Emphasis Being Placed on Reform Activity

1) No Emphasis (Activity either concluded or not initiated)
2) Little Emphasis
3) Some Emphasis
4) Moderately High Emphasis
5) High Emphasis

* No Response

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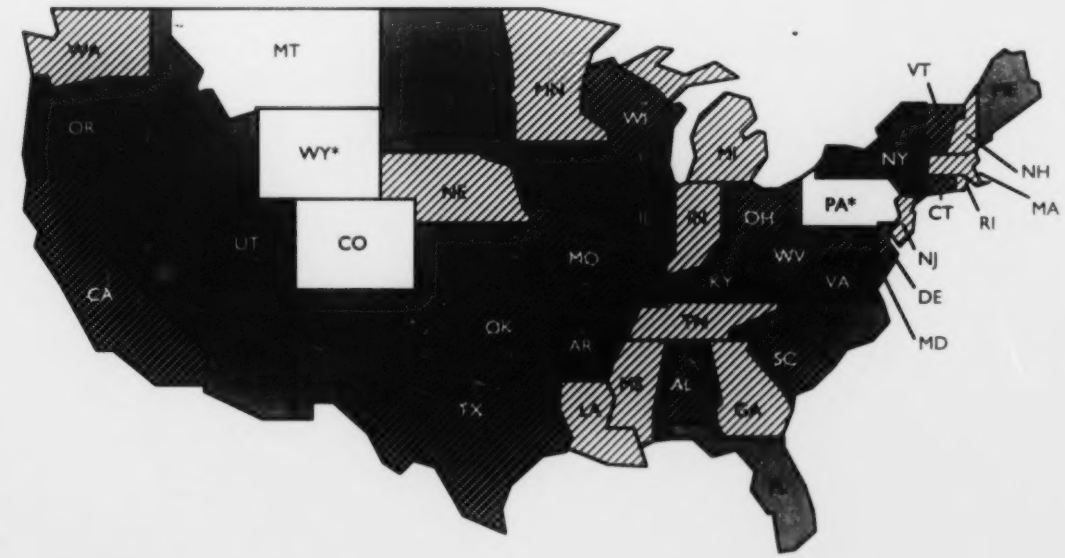
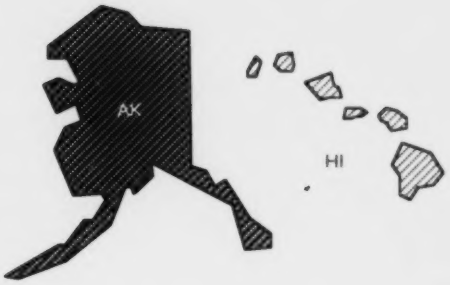
Figure 9. Reforming Preservice Educational Programs in Teacher Preparation Institutions





Unique States

American Samoa	Guam
BIA	Palau
Mariana Islands	Puerto Rico
District of Columbia	Marshall Islands
Micronesia	U.S. Virgin Islands

Degree of Emphasis Being Placedon Reform Activity

1) No Emphasis (Activity either concluded or not initiated)
2) Little Emphasis
3) Some Emphasis
4) Moderately High Emphasis
5) High Emphasis

* No Response

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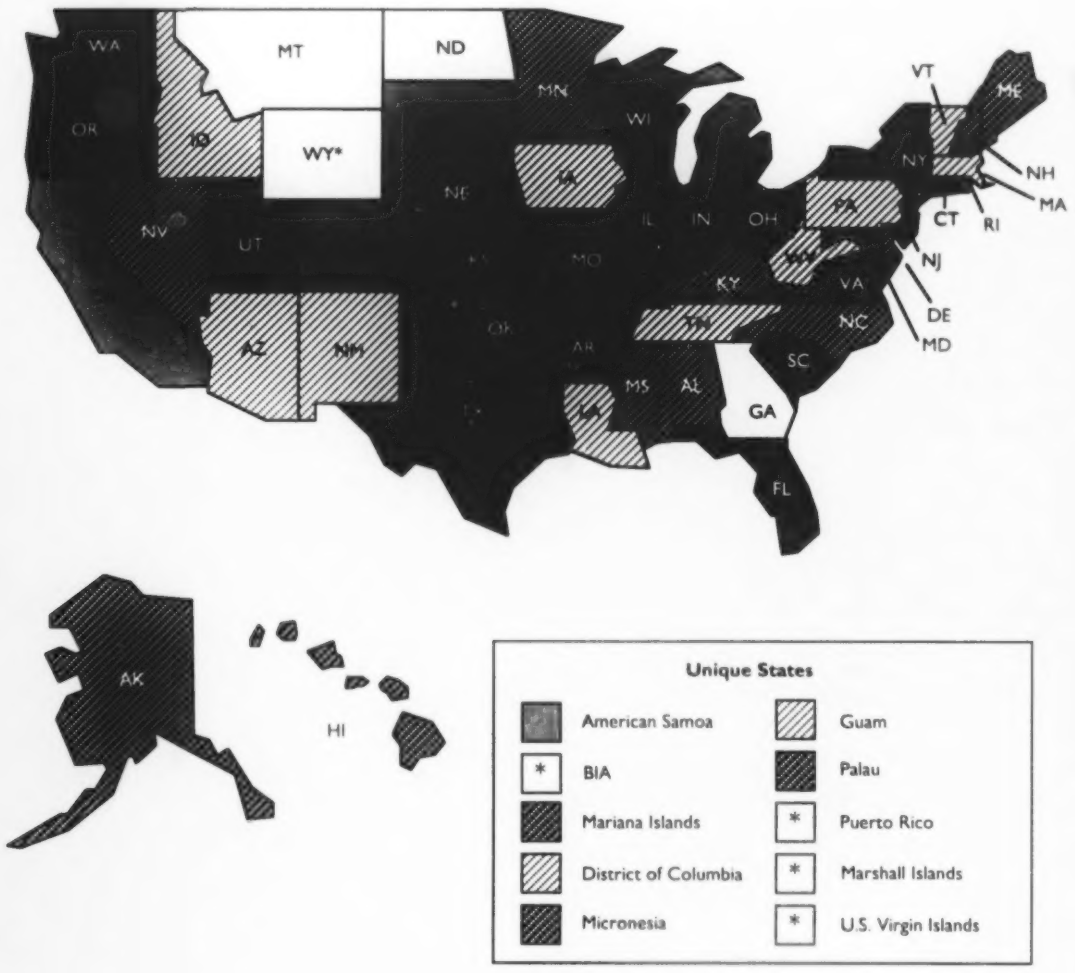
Figure 10. Engaging Parents and Communities in Reform Efforts Through Public Outreach Activities



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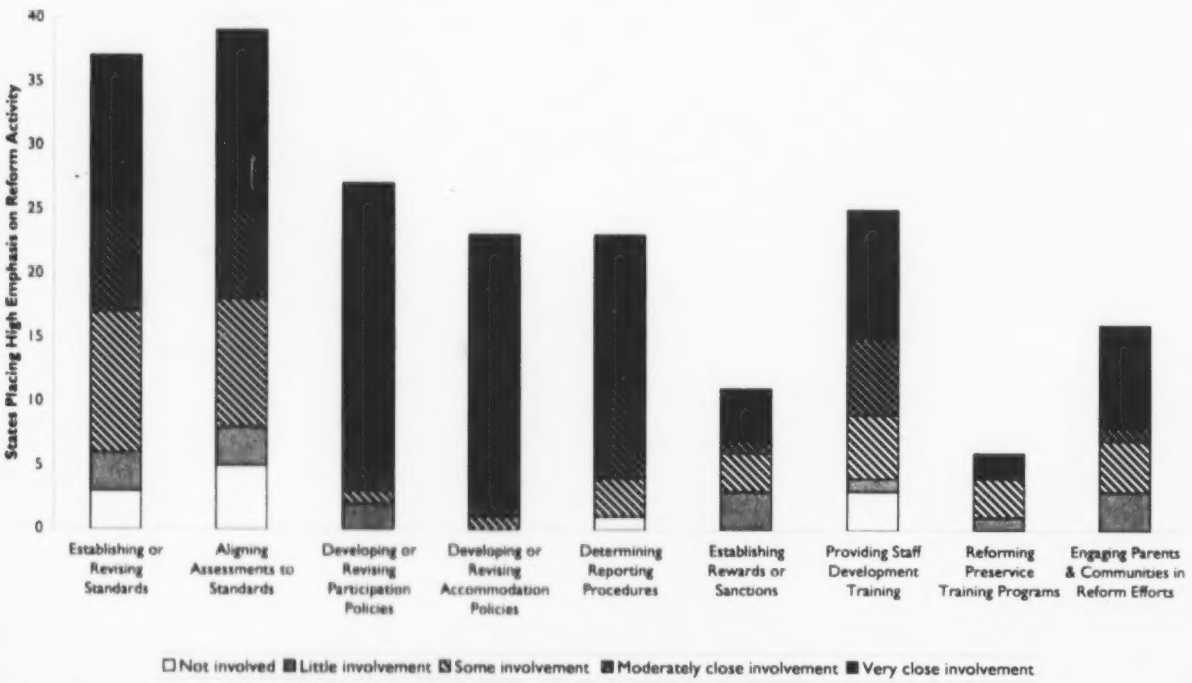
State directors' appraisals of how involved their offices or units have been with these reform activities varied. Anecdotal information received by NCEO in the past suggested that special education involvement was often overlooked in state reform activities. State directors rated their offices' level of involvement in each of the identified reform activities on a five-point scale ranging from "not involved" to "closely involved." See Tables 9 through 17 in the Appendix.

Generally, the more emphasis placed on a reform activity, the greater the involvement of special education in that activity. Still, there are some interesting exceptions to this general finding. Five state directors reported *no* involvement in activities to align assessments to content or curricular standards, even though their state agencies were placing high emphasis on this. In contrast, 29 directors reported being closely involved in activities related to developing or revising policies on participation in statewide assessments.

Figure 11 shows the level of state directors' involvement in reform from the high emphasis (Level 5) states that were profiled in Figures 2 through 10. For example, in the reform activity of Establishing or Revising Standards, though 37 states rated this as a high emphasis activity, only 12 states reported very close involvement of their state directors. In contrast, of the 27 states that rated Developing or Revising Accommodation Policies as a high emphasis activity, 22 states reported very close involvement of their state directors. (Data on state directors' involvement in Figure 11 are derived from Tables 9 through 17 in the Appendix.)

Figure 11. State Special Education Involvement in Reform



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Measuring the Participation of Students with Disabilities in Statewide Testing

SINCE 1991, NCEO HAS ASKED STATE SPECIAL EDUCATION DIRECTORS ABOUT THE extent to which students with disabilities participate in statewide assessment programs. Early results revealed great variability among states in the rate at which students with disabilities participated in testing, as well as an overall lack of reliable information on the extent of their participation.

Participation in testing programs can be reported in a variety of ways, some of which prove to be more useful than others in describing the extent of student participation. In earlier surveys, a relatively small number of states was able to report any of the following data on one or more of their statewide assessments:

- The number of students with disabilities tested.
- The number of students with disabilities excluded or exempted from testing.
- The percentage of test takers who were students with disabilities.
- The percentage of all special education students at the grade or age level tested who were actually assessed.

NCEO promotes the last type of data as the most relevant and useful for policymakers when evaluating the inclusiveness of assessment programs. See Table 2 for information on available participation data in each state.

Table 2. Participation Data Available

	Measure of Participation Rate Collected or Received by Special Education Unit				
Regular States	Number of Students with Disabilities Tested	Number of Students with Disabilities Exempted or Excluded	Percent of All Test Takers Who Were Students with Disabilities	Percent of All Students with Disabilities at the Grade(s) Being Tested Who Were Actually Assessed	Do Not Collect or Receive Any of These Data
Alabama	■	■	■	■	
Alaska					■
Arizona	■	■		■	
Arkansas					■
California	■	■	■	■	
Colorado					■
Connecticut	■	■		■	
Delaware	■	■			
Florida	■	■	■	■	
Georgia					■
Hawaii	■		■	■	
Idaho					■

Table 2. Participation Data Available (continued)

	Measure of Participation Rate Collected or Received by Special Education Unit				
Regular States	Number of Students with Disabilities Tested	Number of Students with Disabilities Exempted or Excluded	Percent of All Test Takers Who Were Students with Disabilities	Percent of All Students with Disabilities at the Grade(s) Being Tested Who Were Actually Assessed	Do Not Collect or Receive Any of These Data
Illinois	■	■	■	■	
Indiana					■
Iowa					■
Kansas	■			■	
Kentucky	■	■	■	■	
Louisiana	■	■	■	■	
Maine	■	■	■	■	
Maryland	■	■	■	■	
Massachusetts	■	■		■	
Michigan	■	■	■	■	
Minnesota					■
Mississippi					■
Missouri	■		■	■	
Montana					■
Nebraska					■
Nevada	■	■	■	■	
New Hampshire		■	■		
New Jersey	■	■	■		
New Mexico					■
New York	■	■	■	■	
North Carolina	■				
North Dakota	■				
Ohio	■	■	■		
Oklahoma					■
Oregon	■		■		
Pennsylvania					■
Rhode Island	■	■	■	■	
South Carolina	■	■	■	■	
South Dakota					■
Tennessee	■	■	■	■	
Texas	■	■	■	■	
Utah				■	
Vermont					■
Virginia	■				
Washington	■	■	■		
West Virginia	■	■	■	■	
Wisconsin	■	■	■	■	
Wyoming					■
Unique States					
American Samoa					■
Bureau of Indian Affairs					*
Mariana Islands					■
District of Columbia					■
Micronesia					■
Guam					■
Marshall Islands					*
Palau	■				
Puerto Rico					*
U.S. Virgin Islands					*
Totals	**32**	**25**	**24**	**24**	**22**

* No response

Twenty-two of fifty-six state directors reported that their offices do *not* currently collect or receive information on the number or rate at which students with disabilities participate in any of their statewide assessments. Of the 34 respondents who reported that they *do* collect or receive such information, the specific measure most commonly collected was the number of students with disabilities who participated in testing.

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New provisions within the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997* call for the public reporting of the numbers of students with disabilities participating in regular statewide assessments by July, 1998. Figure 12 highlights those 32 regular and unique states that indicated such data were available.

State directors also were asked to provide the actual frequency data for the most recent assessment administration cycles. These data are provided in Table 3. In more than half the states, frequency data were either unavailable to the state directors, or represented a different measure of assessment participation (e.g., the percentage of all test takers who were students with disabilities).

Figure 12. State Special Education Departments that Report Collecting or Receiving Data on Number of Students with Disabilities in Statewide Testing

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Table 3. Numbers of Students with Disabilities Participating in Regular Statewide Assessments

State	Name of Assessment or Testing Date	Grade Levels Tested	Number of Students with Disabilities Tested
Alabama	Exit Exam	11	*
	Stanford Achievement Test, Ninth Edition	3 through 11	*
Arizona	In process of being collected		*
California	California did not have a statewide testing program in place during the 1997 survey period. Local districts, however, did provide data to the state special education unit on the number of students with disabilities being tested in local assessments.		
Connecticut	Connecticut Mastery Test	4, 6, and 8	14,125
	Connecticut Academic Performance Test	10	2,422
Delaware	1996 Writing Assessment	3 and 5	29, 386
	1996 Writing Assessment	8 and 10	11,790
Florida	High School Competency Test: October 1996	11	6,445
	1997 Florida Writes!	4	8,214
	1997 Florida Writes!	8	7,066
	1997 Florida Writes!	10	3,828
Hawaii	Stanford Achievement Test, Eighth Edition (Reading)	3	1,155
	Stanford Achievement Test, Eighth Edition (Reading)	6	1,473
	Stanford Achievement Test, Eighth Edition (Reading)	8	1,222
	Stanford Achievement Test, Eighth Edition (Reading)	10	764
Illinois	Spring 1997 Reading, Writing, Mathematics	3, 6, 8, 10	**
	Spring 1997 Science and Social Science	4, 7, 11	**
Kansas	1996 Kansas State Assessment: Reading	3	2,589
	1996 Kansas State Assessment: Math	4	2,843
	1996 Kansas State Assessment: Writing	5	1,843
	1996 Kansas State Assessment: Reading	7	2,209
	1996 Kansas State Assessment: Math	7	2,284
	1996 Kansas State Assessment: Writing	8	1,294
	1996 Kansas State Assessment: Reading	10	1,375
	1996 Kansas State Assessment: Math	10	1,468
	1996 Kansas State Assessment: Writing	10	698

* Other data provided (e.g., percentage of all test takers receiving special education)
** No data available or provided

Although 32 states indicated they collected or received data on the number of students with disabilities in statewide testing, only 15 provided the numbers when requested to do so.

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Table 3. Numbers of Students with Disabilities Participating in Regular Statewide Assessments (continued)

State	Name of Assessment or Testing Date	Grade Levels Tested	Number of Students with Disabilities Tested
Kentucky	1995-96 KIRIS Assessments	4 and 5	*
		8	*
		11 and 12	*
Louisiana	Spring 1997 LEAP Language Arts Test	3	3,778
	Spring 1997 LEAP Language Arts Test	5	4,279
	Spring 1997 LEAP Language Arts Test	7	3,789
	Spring 1997 LEAP Language Arts Test	10	1,715
	Spring 1997 LEAP Mathematics Test	3	3,798
	Spring 1997 LEAP Mathematics Test	5	4,282
	Spring 1997 LEAP Mathematics Test	7	3,777
	Spring 1997 LEAP Mathematics Test	10	1,713
	Spring 1997 LEAP Written Composition Test	10	1,644
	Spring 1997 LEAP Science Test	11	1,238
	Spring 1997 LEAP Social Studies Test	11	1,232
Maine	January 1996	4	*
	April 1996	11	*
	October 1996	8	*
Maryland	1996 MSPAP	3	7,064
	1996 MSPAP	5	8,249
	1996 MSPAP	8	7,377
	1996 MFT	11	5,428
Massachusetts	May 1997	3, 4, 8, and 10	**
Michigan	January 1997 MEAP Math and Reading Tests	4, 7	**
	January 1997 MEAP Writing and Science Tests	5, 8	**
	January 1997 MEAP High School Proficiency Test	11	**

* Other data provided (e.g., percentage of all test takers receiving special education)
** No data available or provided

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Table 3. Numbers of Students with Disabilities Participating in Regular Statewide Assessments (continued)

State	Name of Assessment or Testing Date	Grade Levels Tested	Number of Students with Disabilities Tested
Missouri	Missouri Mastery & Achievement Tests	4	5,509
	Missouri Mastery & Achievement Tests	8	4,583
	Missouri Mastery & Achievement Tests	10	2,660
	Missouri Assessment Program - Mathematics	4	6,814
	Missouri Assessment Program - Mathematics	8	4,256
	Missouri Assessment Program - Mathematics	10	2,345
Nevada	Fall 1997 Terra Nova	4, 8, 10	
	1997 Nevada High School Proficiency Exam	11	Data to be available in 1998
	1997 Writing Assessment	8 and 11	
New Jersey	High School Proficiency Exams: October 1995	11	**
	Early Warning Tests: March 1996	8	**
	High School Proficiency Exams (Retest): April 1996	11	**
New York	May 1996 PEP: Reading	3	23,389
	May 1996 PEP: Math	3	23,662
	May 1996 PEP: Writing	5	24,193
	May 1996 PEP: Reading	6	24,899
	May 1996 PEP: Math	6	24,728
	May 1996 PET: Science	4	25,243
	May 1996 PET: Social Studies	6	24,136
	May 1996 PET: Social Studies	8	20,513
	May 1996 PCT: Reading	8	21,994
	May 1996 PCT: Writing	8	20,471
	May 1996 PCT: Reading	9	889
	May 1996 PCT: Math	9	1,056
	May 1996 RCT: Reading	9, 10, 11, and 12	15,460
	May 1996 RCT: Math	9, 10, 11, and 12	22,735
	May 1996 RCT: Writing	9, 10, 11, and 12	10,681
	May 1996 RCT: Science	9, 10, 11, and 12	19,891
	May 1996 RCT: Global Studies	9, 10, 11, and 12	15,072
	May 1996 RCT: U.S. History and Government	9, 10, 11, and 12	9,242

* Other data provided (e.g., percentage of all test takers receiving special education)
** No data available or provided

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Table 3. Numbers of Students with Disabilities Participating in Regular Statewide Assessments (continued)

State	Name of Assessment or Testing Date	Grade Levels Tested	Number of Students with Disabilities Tested
North Carolina	May 1996	3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8	*
North Dakota	March 1997 California Test of Basic Skills	3, 6, 8, and 11	2,143
Ohio	1995-96	4 and 6	**
	September 1995 and March 1996	9, 10, 11 and 12	**
Oregon	1995-96 OSAP Reading/Literature MC	3	1,961
	1995-96 OSAP Reading/Literature MC	5	2,428
	1995-96 OSAP Reading/Literature MC	8	1,850
	1995-96 OSAP Reading/Literature MC	10	1,060
	1995-96 OSAP Mathematics MC	3	2,406
	1995-96 OSAP Mathematics MC	5	2,603
	1995-96 OSAP Mathematics MC	8	1,907
	1995-96 OSAP Mathematics MC	10	1,086
Rhode Island	Math: Spring 1996	4	1,325
	Writing: Spring 1996	4, 8 and 10	**
	Health: Spring 1996	4	**
	Performance Assessment	unspecified	**
South Carolina	BSAP: April 1996	3	5,284
	BSAP: April 1996	6	3,643
	BSAP: April 1996	8	3,570
	BSAP: April 1996	10	1,882
	BSAP: April 1996	11	785
	BSAP: April 1996	12	394
	Metropolitan Achievement Test: March - May 1996	4	4,243
	Metropolitan Achievement Test: March - May 1996	5	3,703
	Metropolitan Achievement Test: March - May 1996	7	3,091
	Metropolitan Achievement Test: March - May 1996	9	2,849
	Metropolitan Achievement Test: March - May 1996	11	880

* Other data provided (e.g., percentage of all test takers receiving special education)
** No data available or provided

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Table 3. Numbers of Students with Disabilities Participating in Regular Statewide Assessments (continued)

State	Name of Assessment or Testing Date	Grade Levels Tested	Number of Students with Disabilities Tested
Tennessee	March 1996	2 through 8	*
Texas	Spring 1995 TAAS: Reading	3 through 10	94,002
	Spring 1995 TAAS: Math	3 through 10	100,364
	Spring 1995 TAAS: Writing	3 through 10	35,562
Virginia	Literacy Passport Test: Spring 1996	6 through 12	**
Washington	California Test of Basic Skills: October 1996	4 through 8	*
	CPAS: October 1996	11	*
West Virginia	Stanford Achievement Tests: April 1997	3 through 11	**
Wisconsin	Knowledge and Concept Tests	4	**
	Knowledge and Concept Tests	8	5,968
	Knowledge and Concept Tests	10	4,793
	Wisconsin Reading Comprehension Test	3	2,460
Palau	June 1997	8	**

* Other data provided (e.g., percentage of all test takers receiving special education)
** No data available or provided

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It has been suggested that a combination of factors work against the full participation of students with disabilities in large scale assessment programs, especially in states where accountability systems have significant consequences for students, schools, or school systems. Most directors indicated that policies overseeing participation within their states are adequate for local decision making. Table 4 shows that state directors generally perceived major discouraging factors to be (a) the altruistic tendencies of some teachers and parents who wish to protect students from stressful testing situations, and (b) the consequences, or "high stakes," attached to school or district assessment results.

Table 4. Factors Inhibiting Participation of Students with Disabilities in Statewide Assessments

Factors:	Degree to Which Factor Discourages Participation of Students with Disabilities					
	To Little or No Degree 1	2	3	4	To a High Degree 5	Mean Rating
Teachers, parents or others wish to "protect" students from stressful testing situations	1 state	4 states	18 states	21 states	9 states	3.62
High stakes (i.e., sanctions or rewards) are attached to school or district performance	9 states	2 states	9 states	13 states	19 states	3.60
Implementation of participation guidelines varies widely at the school or district level	3 states	3 states	14 states	23 states	6 states	3.53
Monitoring of how well these policies or guidelines are being followed is inadequate	5 states	6 states	13 states	20 states	8 states	3.38
Teachers, parents, or others perceive large scale testing as irrelevant to the educational success of students with disabilities	8 states	9 states	17 states	12 states	5 states	2.94
Policies or guidelines overseeing participation of students with disabilities in assessment are absent or vaguely written	15 states	10 states	11 states	11 states	4 states	2.59

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State Activities in Developing Alternate Assessments

FOR THE SMALL PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO ARE UNABLE TO participate in regular state and district assessments, provisions within the 1997 amendments to the ***Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*** (IDEA) stipulate the need for the development of ***alternate assessments***. By the year 2000, performance of students on the alternate assessment is to be aggregated and reported publicly. Figure 13 reveals that most states have no activity underway. Only two states have implemented or field-tested alternate assessments, and the remaining states are in various stages of discussion or formal planning. Table 5 shows the specific activities of the 20 states that indicated an alternate assessment was either being discussed, developed, or implemented.

Figure 13. Number of States at Various Stages of Implementing Alternate Assessments

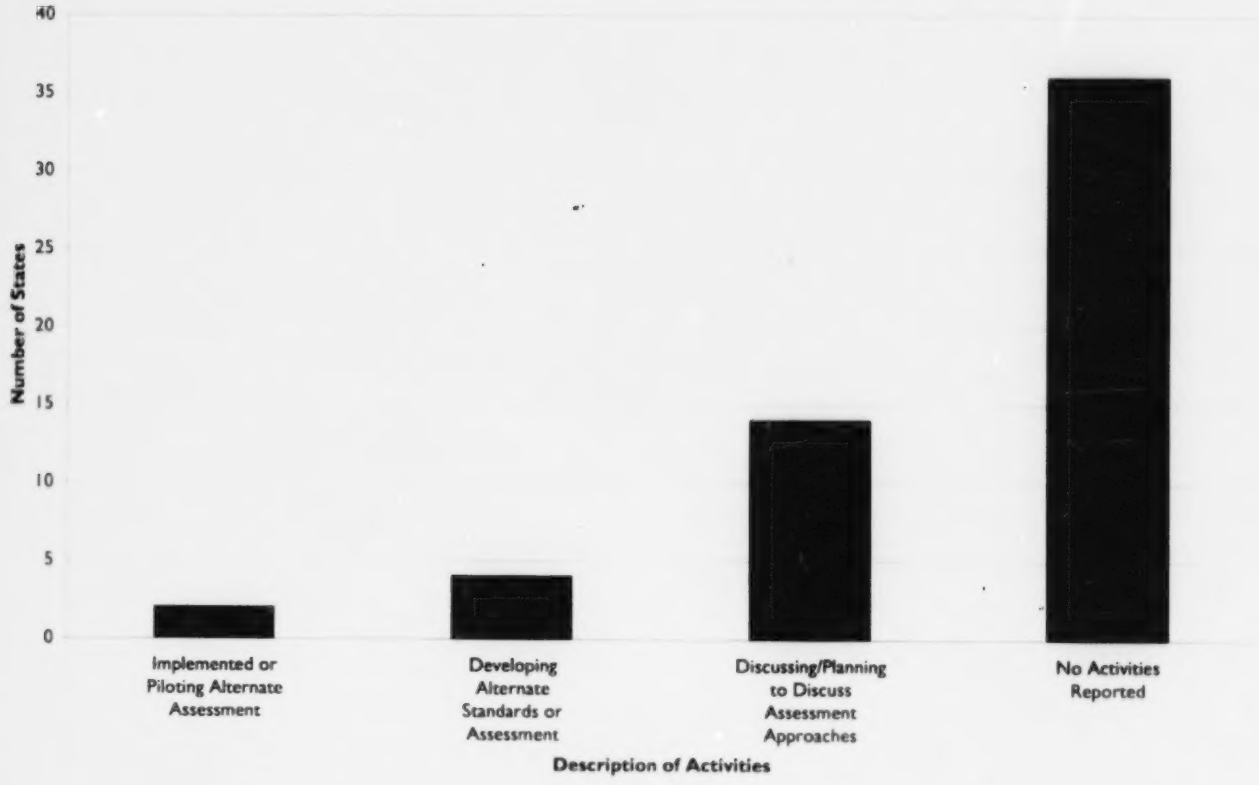

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Table 5. States' Progress in Implementing Alternate Assessments

State	Alternate Assessment Programs
Colorado	A task force is just beginning to meet to discuss alternate assessment possibilities. Data on non-participation in the general assessment will help inform decisions on who will take alternate assessments.
Delaware	A work group has started to develop a plan for an alternate assessment. The plan is due February, 1998 with development to begin by Spring.
Florida	We are investigating an assessment "plan" that may include use of numerous alternative assessments. We will not develop only one alternative assessment for students with disabilities who are exempted from other statewide assessment.
Kansas	A task force is being established to develop the alternate assessment.
Kentucky	Kentucky has fully implemented an Alternate Portfolio System. Since 1992-93 school year, ALL students with severe disabilities have participated in the statewide assessment and accountability system by completing an alternative portfolio during 4th, 8th, and 12th grade years. The portfolio entries include students' schedule, examples of communication systems, school and community job resumes (for 12th grade level), evidence of job experience (8th), and other entries selected and developed by the students.
Maine	We expect to develop alternative assessment forms as Learning Results are implemented.
Maryland	Our state-wide alternate assessment, the Independence Mastery Assessment Program (IMAP) consists of three main components: (1) on-demand authentic performance tasks, (2) compilation of on-going pieces of work collected in student portfolios, and (3) a parent survey of how they see their child's performance. Currently being piloted in more than half the school districts in the state.
Massachusetts	In pilot districts; methods in development stage.
Michigan	We have identified exit performance expectations for moderate and severely impaired populations that need to be incorporated into existing curricula by teachers. We also have exit performance outcomes for high functioning students, which may be implemented depending on the feedback from the above set of expectations.
Missouri	We plan to begin discussions during the summer of 1997.
Nevada	A task force on alternate assessments has been formed and discussions have begun.
New Jersey	The nature [of the assessment] has not yet been determined. We are currently researching options.
New York	Currently under development.
North Carolina	Our state is just in the discussion stage.
Oregon	Since the reauthorization of IDEA, our state has begun discussion.
Rhode Island	Our state has begun initial planning with assistance from the Northeast Regional Resource Center.
Utah	Discussions have started.
Vermont	This is a priority for the next year. We are looking at Kentucky's model; alternatives will be linked to standards.
West Virginia	An alternate assessment is being developed. MSRRC is facilitating this process. Pilot projects will be funded in Spring 1998.
District of Columbia	We do not currently have an alternate method or instrument. We plan over the next 12 months to survey potential alternatives and perhaps pilot one or more.

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Using Assessment Results for Students with Disabilities

EDUCATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ONLY BEGINS WITH their participation in assessments. How assessment information is analyzed, reported, and used is just as important to ensuring accountability as is initial participation.

State directors in 31 states indicated that the performance scores of students with disabilities were disaggregated for one or more of their state assessments. Figure 14 illustrates that 29 of these states indicated that a reason for disaggregating data was to conduct separate analyses of the results. Eight states indicated that the scores of such students were being disaggregated to eliminate their scores from further analysis and reporting. Other provided reasons to disaggregate included conducting comparative studies between special and general education students, and removing scores that were gathered through the use of accommodations believed to invalidate test results.

Figure 14. State Directors' Reasons for Disaggregated Performance Data

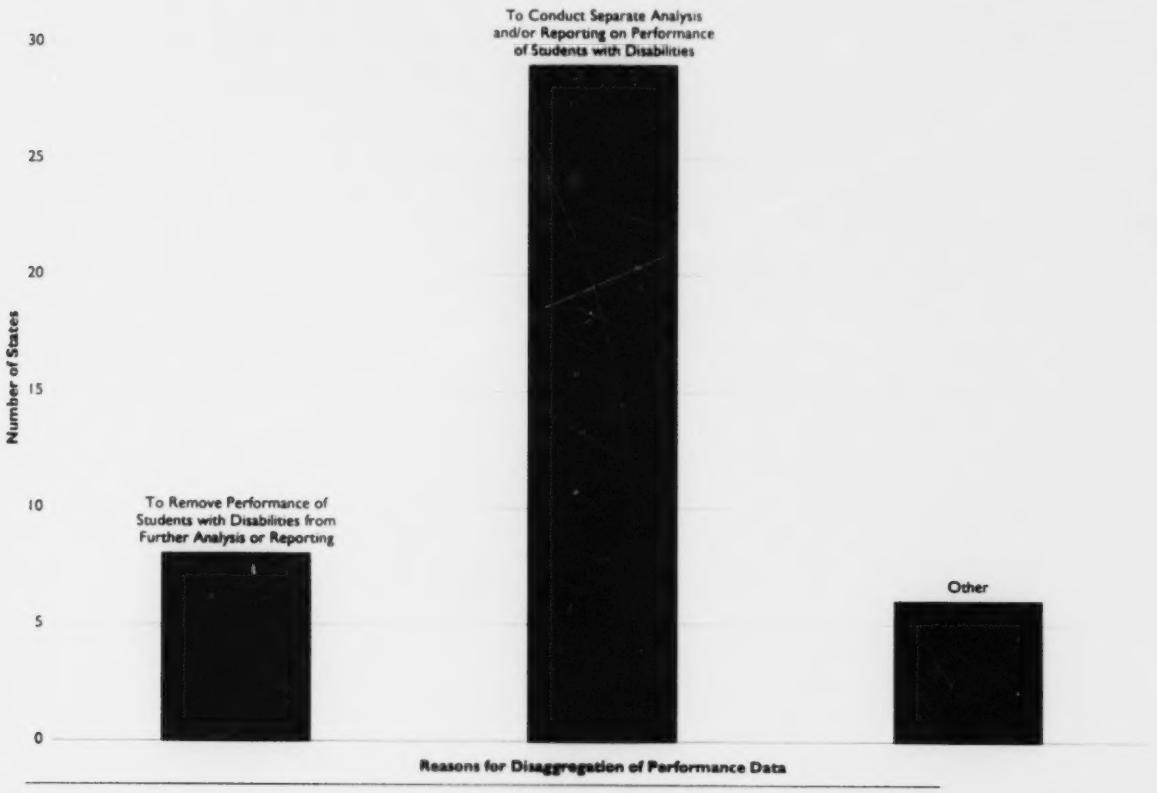

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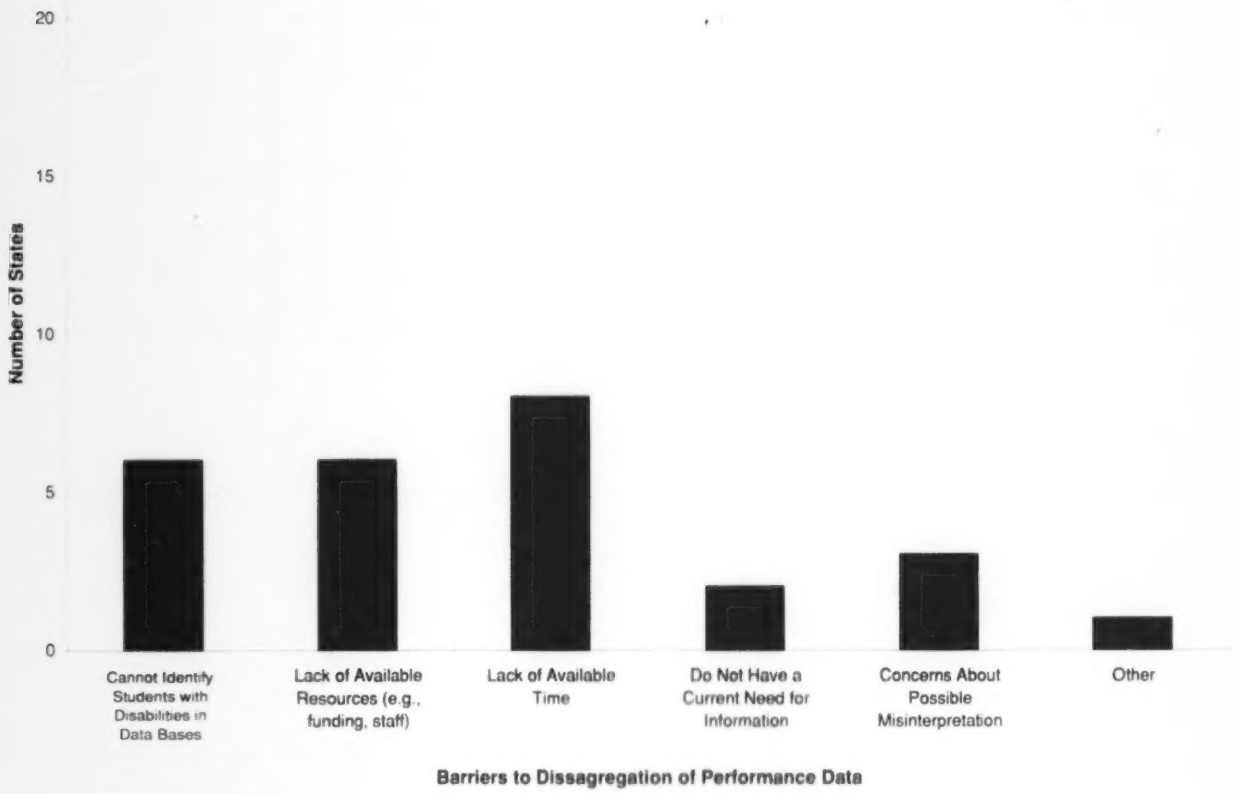
Figure 15 shows that in the 22 states where scores were *not* disaggregated, state directors indicated that the primary reasons included (1) lack of time, (2) lack of resources, and (3) inability to identify students with disabilities in the data bases. Fewer states reported not having an immediate need for the information, or indicated that they had concerns about the possible misinterpretation or misuse of these performance data. The "Other" response shown in the chart refers to a state that expressed concern that such disaggregation could be viewed as a discriminatory practice.

Figure 15. State Directors' Reasons for Not Disaggregating Performance Data



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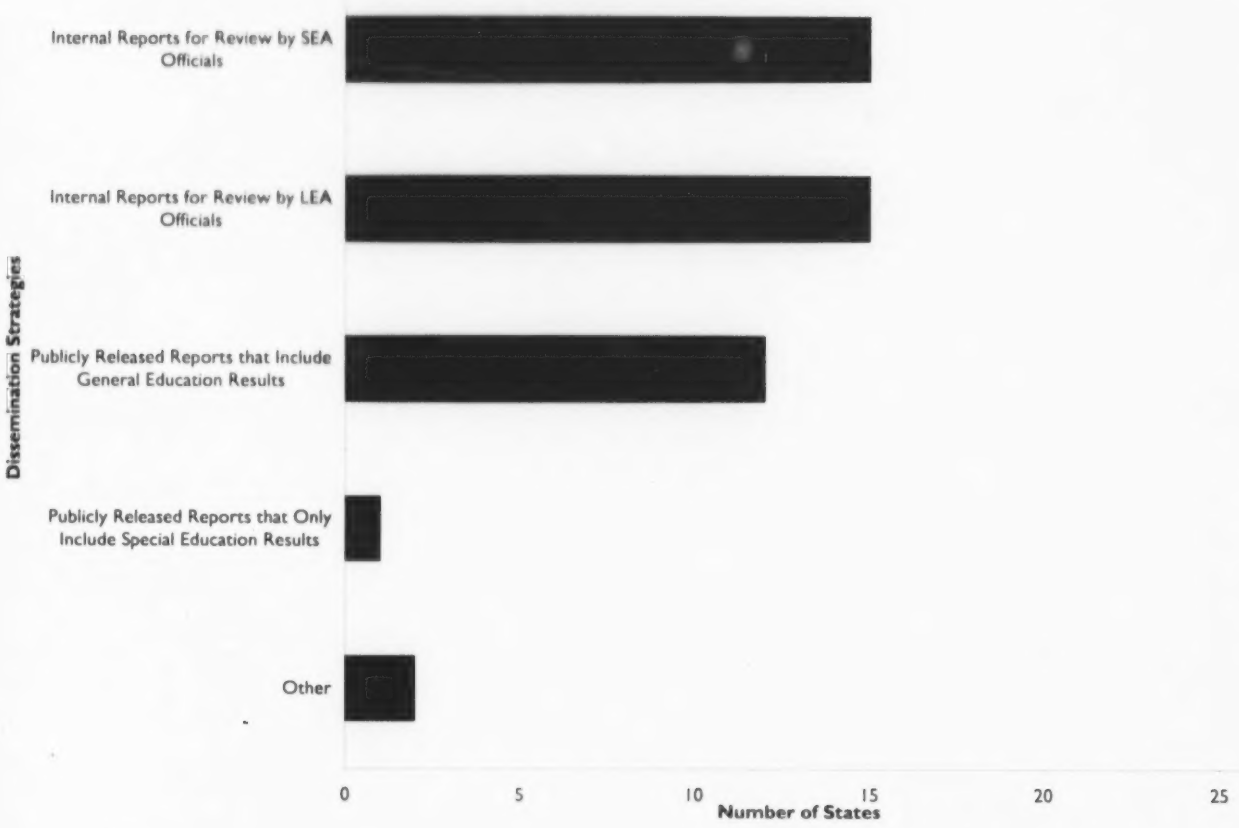
In the 26 states that include scores for students with disabilities in any type of report, the primary avenue of reporting is internal review documents for both state and local educational administrators. Twelve states include the disaggregated performance of students with disabilities in their regularly released reports on educational outcomes. One state reported producing a separate, publicly released report that exclusively featured the assessment performance of students with disabilities. Other reporting strategies included individual reports sent to the schools for school and family use.

Figure 16. How Disaggregated Scores of Performance Data are Reported



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Only 13 state directors suggested that statewide assessment data on students with disabilities were used systematically for the purpose of improving special education programming. A closer examination of responses shows that the uses are diverse (from instructional improvement to accreditation) and many are still in the planning stages. Table 6 shows the actual and planned uses of statewide assessment data on students with disabilities.

Table 6. Actual and Planned Uses of Statewide Assessment Data on Students with Disabilities

States	Plans to Use Data
Colorado	Policies and procedures are being developed to include student performance improvement plans in the Enterprise Contract that schools must submit to the State Board of Education for accreditation purposes.
Kentucky	Schools develop consolidated plans for funding. Assessment data are analyzed to assist in setting priorities for professional development, curriculum alignment, instructional focus, allocation of resources, etc. At the state level, results are used to design and focus professional development, target technical assistance needs, and collaborate on curricular and instructional initiatives with general education.
Maryland	As part of the included population in the assessment, special education is represented on the "School Improvement Team" (SIT) at the local building level. The SIT has responsibility for annually improving the achievement of its school's students.
Michigan	Outcomes Assessment data are used to evaluate the progress of students with disabilities. The assessment strategies have shifted from several assessment formats (different for each disability) to a common assessment format across the four levels of independence. Using categorical assessments, a framework is provided for documenting student performance over time, in different contexts, and in opportunities identified by teachers.
Missouri	There is a standard in district accreditation process that requires disaggregation of data. The standard also requires districts to use the disaggregated data for instructional improvement.
Nevada	Using a Program Improvement Model being developed as the framework for special education monitoring, districts will use student assessment data and other indicators to design and implement Program Improvement Plans.
New Hampshire	Data are used in the Special Education Monitoring and Improvement Process implemented at the local district level.
New Jersey	(In development.) Assessments will be aligned with standards. Frameworks are being created to assist LEAs with curriculum development, to align curriculum with standards for success in assessments.
New York	Results of students with disabilities on statewide assessments are reported, along with results for nondisabled students in a School Report Card, which is disseminated annually to all parents, boards of education, and district staff. A comprehensive quality assurance process focuses on student results. Eleven Key Performance Indicators are used to identify districts that will receive intensive assistance to improve results.
Ohio	District competency based assessment; intervention-based assessment.
South Carolina	For students participating in BSAP-based curriculum, results are used for instructional improvement, promotion/retention, and school incentive rewards. Passing the exit examination is one of the criteria for receiving a high school diploma.
Washington	We are in the process of developing.
West Virginia	Data from statewide assessment results, including students with disabilities who took the test under standard conditions, are used at the classroom and building level for instructional planning and curriculum improvement.

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Individualized Educational Programs and Assessments

CERTAIN PROVISIONS WITHIN THE REAUTHORIZED *INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT* (IDEA) call for increased access by special education students to the curriculum of general education. These requirements will likely increase the need for greater collaboration between special educators and their general education counterparts, and lead to fundamental changes in how Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs) are written, implemented, and evaluated. State directors in only *six* states indicated that IEP teams are required to document the linkage between an individual student's goals and objectives to the state's content or curriculum standards. While several states are considering requiring this, most states had *no* plans to require these linkages.

In contrast, many states are requiring documentation of decisions about a student's participation in testing and the use of accommodations in instruction and assessment. Most state directors indicated that documentation of instructional accommodations is a current IEP requirement; nearly as many indicated that their states require documentation of which assessment a student will take and which accommodations are provided during the assessment. Table 7 provides information on the responses of state directors to questions about written documentation required on the IEP.

Table 7. IEP Alignment with Standards

	Number of States where:		
According to your state's policies, is written documentation required on the IEP concerning:	No plans exist to require this	Such a policy is currently being considered	IEP teams are currently required to document this
How a student's individual goals and objectives are aligned with state's content or curriculum standards	29	20	6
Decisions about which assessment(s) a student will be administered	9	16	31
Decisions about which accommodations should be provided to a student during instruction	7	7	41
Decisions about which accommodations should be provided to a student during statewide assessments	10	16	30
Decisions about the performance standards to which a student will be held	20	16	17

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Measuring Non-Academic Outcomes for Students with Disabilities

THE FIELD OF SPECIAL EDUCATION, WITH ITS EMPHASIS ON INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATIONAL programming and transitional planning, has always embraced educational outcomes that go beyond the "3 Rs." One model that reflects this broader view of education is one advanced by NCEO — a comprehensive model that includes both academic and non-academic domains. The model, constructed through the deliberations of several nationally-representative stakeholder groups, identifies anticipated outcomes for *all* learners, including those with disabilities. Despite its relevance, state directors indicated that data reflecting any of the non-academic domains are not routinely collected or published by state special education divisions or units. This was true, even though there was no limitation on the interpretation of whether data fit within a domain. With the exception of satisfaction measures, those relatively few states that do collect non-academic data seldom publish the information. See Table 8 for data available on non-academic outcomes for students with disabilities.

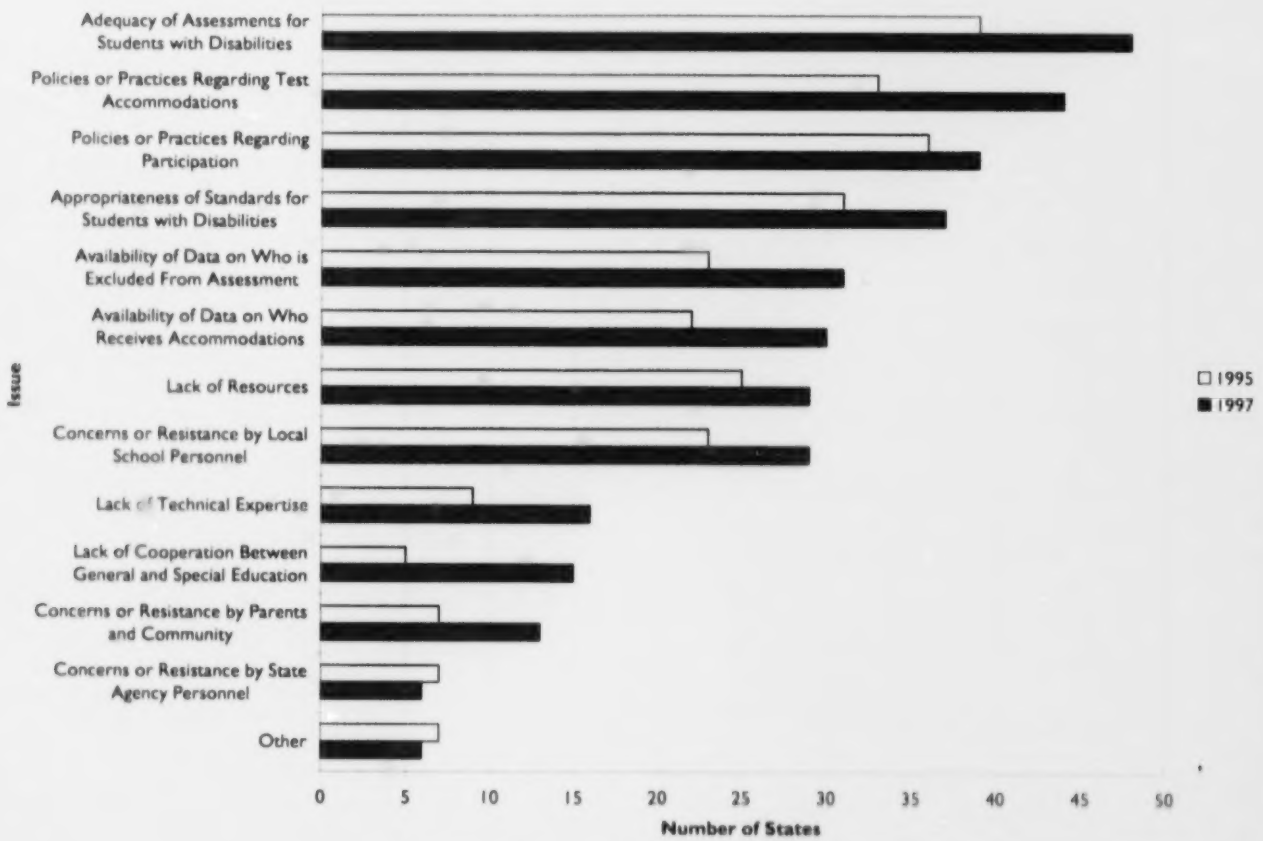
Table 8. Data Available on Non-Academic Outcomes for Students with Disabilities

NCEO Educational Outcome Domains	No Data Available	Data Available, But Not Published	Data Available, And Published
Accommodations and Adaptations: the extent to which students use adaptive technology or compensatory strategies to achieve outcomes	46	10	0
Presence and Participation: the extent to which students with disabilities are present and actively participate in school	33	14	6
Physical Health: the extent to which students engage in healthy behaviors related to physical well-being	46	6	3
Responsibility and Independence: the extent to which student behaviors reflect the ability to act independently and assume personal responsibility	49	6	1
Contribution and Citizenship: the extent to which students participate as citizens in society	49	6	1
Personal and Social Adjustment: the extent to which students demonstrate socially acceptable and healthy behaviors and attitudes	48	6	2
Satisfaction: the extent to which students or their parents hold a favorable attitude toward education	45	5	5

Current Issues and Technical Assistance Needs

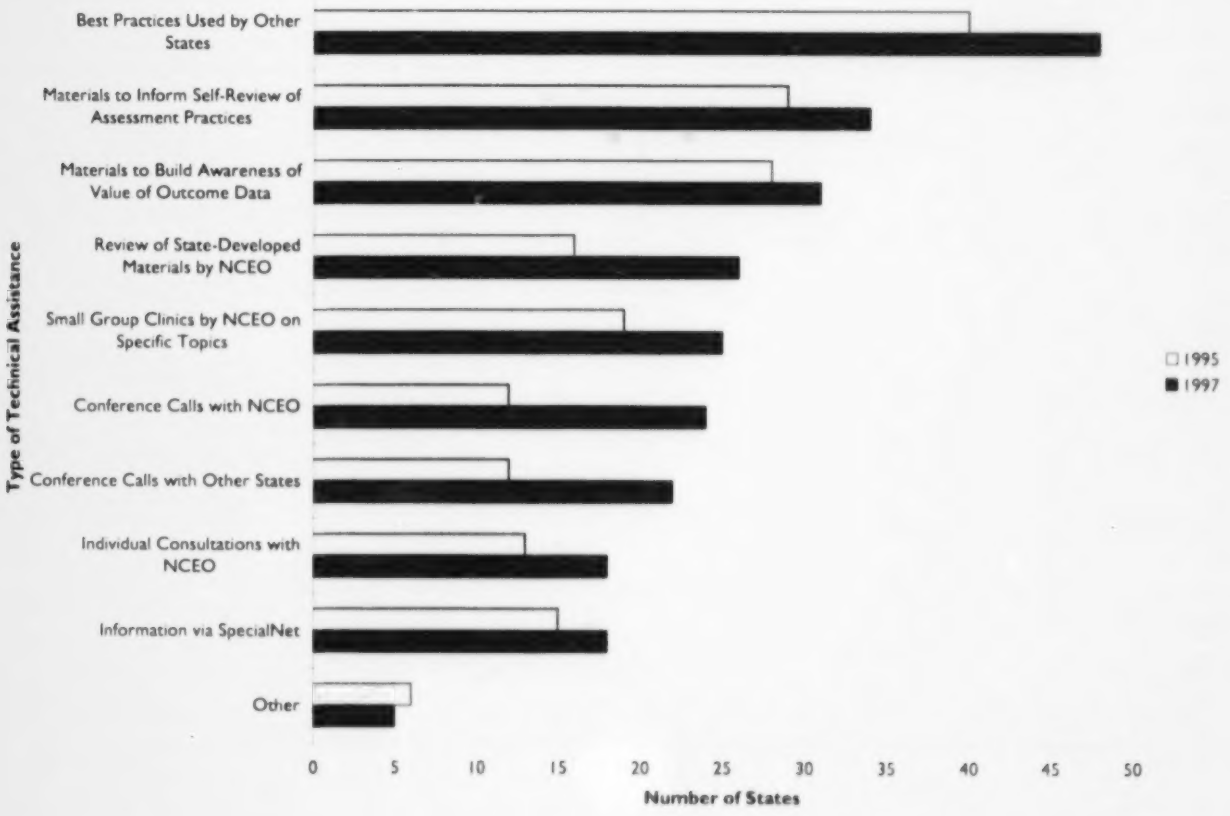
STATE DIRECTORS IDENTIFIED THE ISSUES THEY ARE CURRENTLY FACING AND THEIR primary technical assistance needs. These were compared to issues and technical assistance needs identified in the NCEO 1995 national survey. Figure 17 shows that for 11 of the 12 issues identified, the number of states identifying it as important increased, sometimes dramatically. The number of states indicating a lack of co-operation between special and general education leaped from 5 to 15 states, a 200% increase. Resistance from parents or communities also showed an 86% increase, rising from 7 to 13 states. The most frequently selected issues remained relatively constant from 1995 to 1997, with a large number of states obviously faced with the challenges of making standards-based reform relevant for students with disabilities.

Figure 17. Current Issues State Directors are Facing



Technical assistance needs reflect the issues states are facing. Not surprisingly, the increase in the number of states facing critical issues in standards-based reform activities is matched by an increase in the overall number of states seeking technical assistance in this area. Figure 18 illustrates how each of the identified technical assistance strategies was selected by a larger number of states in 1997 survey than in 1995. The most desired technical assistance is information on what other state educational agencies have done to successfully meet the increasing challenges. Written materials that can assist state teams in their review of assessment policies and practices also has remained a highly desired option for survey respondents.

Figure 18. Technical Assistance Needs for State Directors



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Appendix: State Directors' Level of Involvement in Reform Activities

TABLES 9 THROUGH 17 SHOW STATE DIRECTORS' LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT IN NCEO'S nine identified areas of reform activities.

See Figures 2 through 10 (pages 6–14) for illustrations of the degree of emphasis on the identified areas of reform activities. Figure 11 (page 15) illustrates the level of involvement state directors have in the "high emphasis" states.

Table 9. State Directors' Level of Involvement in Establishing or Revising Educational Outcomes, Standards, or Curricular Frameworks

Level of involvement by your special education division or unit:	Emphasis placed on this activity by state education agency this year:					
	1: No emphasis	2: Little emphasis	3: Some emphasis	4: Moderate/ high emphasis	5: High emphasis	Total Number of States
1: Not involved	1 state			1 state	3 states	5 states
2				2 states	3 states	5 states
3			3 states	5 states	11 states	19 states
4			1 state	4 states	8 states	13 states
5: Closely involved					12 states	12 states
Total Number of States	1 state		4 states	12 states	37 states	54 states

Table 10. State Directors' Level of Involvement in Aligning Assessments to Content or Curricular Standards

Level of involvement by your special education division or unit:	Emphasis placed on this activity by state education agency this year:					
	1: No emphasis	2: Little emphasis	3: Some emphasis	4: Moderate/ high emphasis	5: High emphasis	Total Number of States
1: Not involved	3 states		1 state		5 states	9 states
2		1 state		2 states	3 states	6 states
3			3 states	2 states	10 states	15 states
4				2 states	7 states	9 states
5: Closely involved				1 state	14 states	15 states
Total Number of States	3 states	1 state	4 states	7 states	39 states	54 states

Table 11. State Directors' Level of Involvement in Developing or Revising Participation and Exemption Policies for Statewide Assessments

Level of involvement by your special education division or unit:	Emphasis placed on this activity by state education agency this year:					
	1: No emphasis	2: Little emphasis	3: Some emphasis	4: Moderate/ high emphasis	5: High emphasis	Total Number of States
1: Not involved	4 states		1 state	1 state		6 states
2					2 states	2 states
3		1 state	3 states	1 state	1 state	6 states
4			6 states	3 states	2 states	11 states
5: Closely involved		1 state	1 state	5 states	22 states	29 states
Total Number of States	4 states	2 states	11 states	10 states	27 states	54 states

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Table 12. State Directors' Level of Involvement in Developing or Revising Testing Accommodation Policies

Level of involvement by your special education division or unit:	Emphasis placed on this activity by state education agency this year:					
	1: No emphasis	2: Little emphasis	3: Some emphasis	4: Moderate/ high emphasis	5: High emphasis	Total Number of States
1: Not involved	5 states		1 state	2 states		8 states
2	1 state	1 state				2 states
3			6 states		1 state	7 states
4			6 states	2 states	1 state	9 states
5: Closely involved			1 state	6 states	21 states	28 states
Total Number of States	6 states	1 state	14 states	10 states	23 states	54 states

Table 13. State Directors' Level of Involvement in Determining Statewide Reporting Procedures

Level of involvement by your special education division or unit:	Emphasis placed on this activity by state education agency this year:					
	1: No emphasis	2: Little emphasis	3: Some emphasis	4: Moderate/ high emphasis	5: High emphasis	Total Number of States
1: Not involved	6 states		1 state	3 states	1 state	11 states
2		1 state	2 states	3 states		6 states
3			4 states	2 states	3 states	9 states
4				4 states	7 states	11 states
5: Closely involved				3 states	12 states	15 states
Total Number of States	6 states	1 state	7 states	15 states	23 states	52 states

Table 14. State Directors' Level of Involvement in Establishing Rewards or Sanctions for Schools and Districts

Level of involvement by your special education division or unit:	Emphasis placed on this activity by state education agency this year:					
	1: No emphasis	2	3	4	5: High emphasis	Total Number of States
1: Not involved	15 states	4 states	4 states	1 state		24 states
2		3 states	4 states		2 states	9 states
3			5 states	1 state	2 states	8 states
4			1 state	3 states		4 states
5: Closely involved	1 state		1 state		4 states	6 states
Total Number of States	16 states	7 states	15 states	5 states	8 states	51 states

Table 15. State Directors' Level of Involvement in Staff Development Training to Promote Implementation of New Standards and Assessments

Level of involvement by your special education division or unit:	Emphasis placed on this activity by state education agency this year:					
	1: No emphasis	2: Little emphasis	3: Some emphasis	4: Moderate/ high emphasis	5: High emphasis	Total Number of States
1: Not involved	2 states		4 states		3 states	9 states
2		2 states		3 states	1 state	6 states
3			4 states	3 states	5 states	12 states
4				7 states	6 states	13 states
5: Closely involved				2 states	10 states	12 states
Total Number of States	2 states	2 states	8 states	15 states	25 states	52 states

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Table 16. State Directors' Level of Involvement in Reforming Preservice Educational Programs in Teacher Preparation Institutions

Level of involvement by your special education division or unit:	Emphasis placed on this activity by state education agency this year:					
	1: No emphasis	2: Little emphasis	3: Some emphasis	4: Moderate/ high emphasis	5: High emphasis	Total Number of States
1: Not involved	3 states	4 states				7 states
2	1 state	5 states	3 states	2 states	1 state	12 states
3		2 states	12 states	3 states	3 states	20 states
4			2 states	5 states		7 states
5: Closely involved		1 state	1 state	3 states	2 states	7 states
Total Number of States	4 states	12 states	18 states	13 states	6 states	53 states

Table 17. State Directors' Level of Involvement in Engaging Parents and Communities in Reform Efforts Through Public Outreach Activities

Level of involvement by your special education division or unit:	Emphasis placed on this activity by state education agency this year:					
	1: No emphasis	2: Little emphasis	3: Some emphasis	4: Moderate/ high emphasis	5: High emphasis	Total Number of States
1: Not involved	3 states	2 states	2 states			7 states
2		2 states	1 state	1 state	3 states	7 states
3			7 states	8 states	4 states	19 states
4		1 state	2 states	5 states	1 state	9 states
5: Closely involved				3 states	8 states	11 states
Total Number of States	**3 states**	**5 states**	**12 states**	**17 states**	**16 states**	**53 states**

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